

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 02257 251716Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00  
USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-07  
OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-08 IO-13 /081 W  
-----251733Z 105597 /41

O 251631Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9505

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2257

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, SP  
SUBJECT: AREILZA LEAVES THE PARTIDO POPULAR

REF: MADRID 2101, MADRID 2146

1. FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER AREILZA, IN A SURPRISE MOVE, RESIGNED FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENCY OF THE PARTIDO POPULAR AND FROM THE PARTY ITSELF LATE LAST NIGHT AND LEFT FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE FOR A FEW DAYS. AREILZA ALSO INDICATED THAT HE WOULD NOT STAND FOR OFFICE IN THE COMING ELECTIONS, THOUGH AFTERNOON PRESS SUGGESTS HE WOULD BE APPOINTED SENATOR. INASMUCH AS HE HAD NOT HINTED TO ALLARD LOWENSTEIN NOR, IN A SUBSEQUENT PHONE CONVERSATION, TO EMBOFF (REFS) AT EVEN THE POSSIBILITY OF A RESIGNATION, WE CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT IT WAS THE RESULT OF HIS MEETING TWO DAYS AGO, TOGETHER WITH PLO CABANILLAS, WITH PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ.

2. A SOURCE IN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "TEAM" INTERPRETS AREILZA'S RESIGNATION AS THE RESULT OF THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER'S PREFERENCE FOR NOT ALLOWING HIS "PARTICO POPULAR" (PP), OR THE PP-PROMOTED "CENTRO DEMOCRATICO," TO BE USED AS AN ELECTORAL INSTRUMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT. THIS IS A CONFIDENTIAL

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MINORITY POSITION WITHIN THE PP, HOWEVER, AND AREILZA HAS BEEN UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM THE PP MAJORITY, PARTICULARLY THE "TACITOS," FOR SOME TIME AS A RESULT. OUR SOURCE ASSUMES THAT, DURING THE AREILZA/CABANILLAS MEETING WITH SUAREZ ON WEDNESDAY, THE PRIME MINISTER INDICATED THAT HE INTENDED TO ASSUME A PARTISAN POSTURE IN THE ELECTION AND THAT THE "CENTRO" WAS VERY MUCH A PART OF HIS PLANS. THIS

LEFT AREILZA WITH THE CHOICE OF GOING ALONG WITH THE PP MAJORITY (AND BOWING TO SUAREZ) OR OPTING OUT, AND HE CHOSE THE LATTER COURSE.

3. GIVEN OUR RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH AREILZA, WE JUDGE THE INTERPRETATION GIVEN BY THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS MAY BE THE CORRECT ONE. AN EARLY PRESS INTERPRETATION HAS HIM STEPPING OUT OF THE PP BECAUSE SUAREZ ASKED HIM TO DO SO, BUT THIS IS TOO SIMPLE. AREILZA, IT WILL BE RECALLED, SHOWED EXTREME PIQUE AT THE SELECTION OF SUAREZ FOR PRIME MINISTER WHEN HE HAD BELIEVED OR LET HIMSELF BELIEVE HE MIGHT BE THE CHOICE. FINDING HIS VIEWS THWARTED AGIN HE MAY WELL HAVE FOR THIS REASON DECIDED TO GET OFF THE ELECTORAL MERRY-GO-ROUND. AREILZA HAS NOT ENJOYED THE PARTICULAR CONFIDENCE OF OTHER POLITICAL GROUPS HERE, BUT IT MUST ALSO BE SAID THAT HIS VIEWS ABOUT A SUAREZ CANDIDACY ARE BY NO MEANS HIS ALONE. (SEE MADRID 2215 AND SEPT OF MARCH 25.) MOREOVER, HIS REPUTATION IN WESTERN EUROPE COULD CONTRIBUTE TO SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE POLITICAL PROCESS. EATON

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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